

County of Los Angeles  
Department of Parks and Recreation

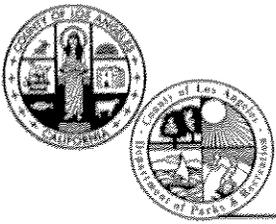
# VOLUNTEER MANUAL





*“Creating Community Through People,  
Parks and Programs”*

JUNE 2009



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
*"Creating Community Through People, Parks and Programs"*

Russ Guiney, Director

---

Welcome to the Department of Parks and Recreation!

The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation provides leadership for healthier communities, environmental stewardship, community connection and partnership in its promotion of social, recreational and cultural opportunities.

A lot of work goes into the recreation field, because in addition to fun activities, unique programs and exciting events, we have to make sure we are keeping our facilities and patrons safe, keeping our programs vibrant and making ourselves the most courteous and effective public servants that we can be.

We rely on volunteers like you to augment the excellent service and commitment of public employees and the outstanding contributions we all make each day to enrich and enhance the quality of life of our patrons and the community at large. Our beautiful facilities and affordable programs are truly enhanced by your professional and caring attitude and I know through your experience with this Department, you will come to understand even more what it means to "Create Community through People, Parks and Programs" and help facilitate the "Caring and Effective Service" that the County of Los Angeles stands for.

Thank you for contributing your time and hard work. Each of you will play an important role in the Department of Parks and Recreation and I want to emphasize how much your commitment will positively affect the lives of million of residents and visitors alike.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Russ Guiney'.

Russ Guiney  
Director

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	4
Volunteer Program Management .....	4
Department Mission Statement.....	5
Volunteer Mission Statement.....	5
Volunteer Code of Ethics.....	5
Definition of A Volunteer.....	6
Objectives/Goals.....	6
Volunteer Categories.....	6
Approved Volunteer Opportunities and Utilization of Volunteers.....	7
Recruitment.....	8
Application Process.....	8
Orientation.....	9
Volunteer ID Cards.....	9
Dress Code.....	10
Media Contacts.....	10
Chain of Command.....	10
Record Keeping.....	11
Volunteer Files .....	11
Timekeeping.....	11
Recognition and Awards.....	12
County Insurance and Indemnification Program.....	13
Eligibility .....	13
Summary of Benefits .....	13
Volunteers who drive in the course of their assignment .....	15

### Attachments:

- A. Volunteer Application
- B. Volunteer Time Sheet
- C. Equality Training
- D. Youth Protection Training

## INTRODUCTION

The success of the Volunteer Program depends strongly upon the ability of Department staff and volunteers fostering and maintaining a harmonious working relationship. This is a dynamic program which grows and evolves to meet the needs of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation and the needs of the communities it serves.

These policies are for the Department of Parks and Recreation, in accordance with the policies of the County of Los Angeles. For any questions on these policies, please contact the Volunteer Programs Coordinator immediately.

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator is responsible for providing direction, coordination and support of the volunteer programs throughout the department and through supervisors at each facility where volunteer programs are in place.

At sites where volunteer programs exist, a Departmental staff member is responsible for the direct supervision and guidance of the program. Some of the duties of these Volunteer Program Supervisors are to:

- Implement volunteer programs in accordance with Departmental policies and procedures.
- Assist with the recruitment, selection, orientation, training and evaluation of volunteers.
- Ensure that volunteers comply with all rules and regulations and attend all orientations and training as required by the Department.
- Maintain attendance/time records of volunteers and their service.
- Submit monthly reports to the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.

## DEPARTMENT MISSION

We will provide the residents and visitors of Los Angeles County with quality recreational opportunities that promote a healthy lifestyle and strengthen the community through diverse physical, educational and cultural programming, and will enhance the community environment by acquiring, developing and maintaining County parks, gardens, golf courses, trails, and open space areas.

## VOLUNTEER MISSION STATEMENT

The Volunteers of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation are dedicated to supporting the department in achieving its goals and enhancing their communities "Through People, Parks and Programs".

## VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

- Uphold the Department's and Volunteer Mission Statements.
- Demonstrate commitment to your volunteer service.
- Respect the confidentiality of Department sensitive information.
- Accept supervision and training. Ask questions about policy and procedures you do not understand.
- Take pride in your position. You are a valuable team member and Department representative. Maintain a professional appearance.
- Demonstrate collaboration and loyalty. Work within the Department's mission, its staff, and its programs for the greater good of the community.
- Follow the proper chain of command. Report concerns to your Facility Volunteer Program Supervisor and/or the Department Volunteer Programs Coordinator. Resolve issues in a timely manner.
- Maintain professional customer service standards at all times. Refrain from morbid conversation, idle curiosity or inappropriate gossip about the staff, other volunteers and/or visitors.
- Contribute your skills, energy and experience. Be eager to offer a willing heart and mind. Your knowledge will benefit the Department and the community.

## DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEER

- A. A volunteer is any individual who performs hours of service in a County department for civic, charitable, health, humanitarian, recreational, public safety or general welfare reasons, without promise, expectation or receipt of any compensation for services rendered.
- B. Individuals shall be considered volunteers only when their services are offered freely and without pressure of coercion, direct or implied, from the County.
- C. An individual shall not be considered a volunteer if the individual is otherwise employed by the County to perform the same type of services as those for which the individual proposes to volunteer.

## OBJECTIVES/GOALS

- A. To support Department staff members and facilities in providing excellent service to the communities we serve.
- B. Enhance the experience of our patrons by providing information about our facilities and their programs offered.
- C. Provide a safe and enjoyable environment for patrons, staff and fellow Volunteers.

## VOLUNTEER CATEGORIES

There are two categories of Volunteers within the Department of Parks and Recreation:

- A. Teen Volunteers (ages 14 – 17)
- B. Adult Volunteers (ages 18 and older)

## APPROVED VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND UTILIZATION OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers may assist in many different capacities.

Park Volunteers may assist with customer service & information tasks, special projects, and regular facility operations.

Youth Sports Volunteers may be team coaches and support staff, referees, umpires, and other officials.

Special Programs Volunteers include mounted assisted units, trail maintenance and surveyors, Nature Center Docents, Arboretum and Museum Volunteers

Special event volunteers include volunteers which may only want to participate in one time events or programs. This may also include individuals wishing to satisfy community service requirements from schools or religious and community organizations.

Group Volunteers can be from scouting groups, boy/girl clubs and other organizations, and churches and civic groups.

Volunteering with the Department of Parks and Recreation is an “at-will” service. Both the Department and/or Volunteer can end its service relationship at any time, with or without cause. All volunteer services are at the discretion of the Department.

The Department reserves the right to dismiss any volunteer who does not follow policy and/or procedure. Some examples of reasons a volunteer can be dismissed include, but are not limited to:

- Disorderly conduct
- Insubordination
- Intoxication
- Possession or use of drugs/narcotics
- Possession of any unlawful weapon
- Defacing County property
- Abuse of the dress code
- Falsifying documents
- Theft or attempted theft
- Making false statements or making false reports
- Disclosing Departmental and/or confidential information
- Failing to follow the chain of command
- Inappropriate use of the Volunteer ID Card

## RECRUITMENT

Volunteers are recruited throughout the communities that our facilities serve. Our best source of recruitment comes from you, the volunteer. Invite friends, neighbors, and family members to visit our programs and become part of our "Volunteer Family". The Department uses its web-site and participation at different events to recruit for and promote the Volunteer Programs. The most effective recruitment tool is "word-of-mouth" advertising from current volunteers, like you.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is relatively simple:

- The prospective volunteers shall complete the Volunteer Application (Attachment A)
- The Volunteer Program Supervisor, or designee, shall conduct an interview with the applicant to go over the application and determine the best suited position for the prospective volunteer.
- Volunteers must pass a screening process, including Live Scan fingerprinting, before they can start their service with the Department. The applicant must submit a completed Live Scan Form with proper identification to the Volunteer office, or designated location to have their fingerprints scanned and processed. Results from the Live Scan process must be received by the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator prior to the applicant's start of service. A prospective Volunteer may not begin service to the Department until the screening process has been completed.

Each Volunteer will be assigned a volunteer identification number from the office of the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator. The ID number will be on the Volunteer ID Card, which will be issued to the Volunteer upon the successful completion of the application process.

The Volunteer will meet with the Volunteer Program Supervisor, or designee, to receive and go over the Volunteer Manual and sign an acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of the manual.

## ORIENTATION

All Volunteers must attend a mandatory orientation which will include departmental policies, identification cards, approved volunteer duties, and an explanation of the County's Volunteer Insurance Program. Orientation will be held at the facility, or other Department location, as appropriate. It is required that new volunteers attend orientation at the earliest opportunity and prior to the start of their service to the Department.

In addition to Departmental policies, orientation will include Equality Training, which covers the County and Departmental policies on harassment and discrimination, and Working with Youth Training.

Volunteers shall receive a facility-specific orientation and training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to complete their assigned tasks. This facility and job specific training should be provided by the Volunteer Program Supervisor, or designee, and be held at the facility, upon the commencement of the volunteer's service at the facility.

Volunteers shall receive periodic ongoing training as deemed appropriate by their Volunteer Program Supervisor or the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator. All volunteers shall comply with all orders and directives, issued by the Department, whether oral or written.

## IDENTIFICATION CARDS

A Departmental Volunteer Identification (ID) Card will be issued to each Park, Youth Sport Programs, and Special Programs Volunteers who have successfully completed the application and background process. The ID card will include the volunteer's name, picture, classification and Department assigned identification number. In accordance with County Ordinances, Department ID Cards must be worn and visible while at County facilities, at all times. Group and Special Event Volunteers will be issued a temporary Volunteer ID, at their specific event, which must be worn and visible at all times.

The Volunteer ID Card remains the property of the Department. Misuse and misrepresentation of the Volunteer ID Card is strictly prohibited. Volunteers are required to turn in their ID card to their Volunteer Program Supervisor upon the request, or at the end of their service to the Department.

Because the Volunteer ID Card is in fact County property and is serialized, a police report will be required for any lost or stolen ID card. The Volunteer will be responsible for the replacement costs of the card.

## DRESS CODE

Volunteers shall wear attire appropriate and safe for their assignment. Although it is good to be comfortable, safety is paramount. The Volunteer ID card must be worn and visible at all times, when volunteering. Group and Special Event Volunteers will receive a temporary Volunteer ID, at their specific event, and must be worn and visible at all times.

## MEDIA CONTACTS

The Department works closely with the media through our Public Information Officer and Assistants as liaisons between the Department and the media. Only the Department Director, Chief Deputy Director, Special Assistant to the Director, Deputy Directors, Public Information Officer, Public Information Assistants, or designated staff members shall conduct interviews, answer questions or provide information to members of the media. If volunteers receive media inquiries, they are to refer the inquiry to their supervisor, who shall make the proper notifications. At no time shall volunteers discuss Departmental information with members of the media.

## CHAIN OF COMMAND

Volunteers must follow the proper chain of command. All problems, issues and concerns must be directed to the volunteer's immediate program supervisor. Depending on the issue at hand, the Volunteer Program Supervisor may direct the volunteer to his/her supervisor, or to the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator. In either case, the Volunteer Program Supervisor shall set up meetings, as necessary, to address any issues in a timely manner. In the event of emergencies, the volunteer shall contact the Parks & Recreation Staff at the facility, or the Volunteer Programs Coordinator, immediately.

## RECORD KEEPING

All original forms shall be kept in a Volunteer file at the facility where the volunteer serves. The Volunteer Program Supervisor shall forward a copy of the application to the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator at the Department's Executive Office. All Volunteer files and copies are confidential and shall be kept in a locked and secured location.

### A. VOLUNTEER FILES

Volunteer files are confidential personal history of the Volunteer from the date of hire through the end of their service. They must be maintained for every volunteer and must contain the following:

- Application form
- Fingerprint clearance through Live Scan
- Photograph
- Copy of identification (driver's license. etc.)
- Proof of auto insurance (if applicable)
- Emergency information – Contact form
- Time Sheets
- Training Records
- Commendations
- Copies of award nominations
- Records of awards received

### B. TIMEKEEPING

All facilities must provide standardized time sheets for Volunteers to record their hours worked. Hours shall be recorded for all Volunteers, on an individual basis. A Volunteer's cumulative hours commence with his/her original hire date. This becomes an important factor because these hours apply to special acknowledgements available for Volunteer recognition.

Volunteers are responsible for filling out and submitting completed time sheets to their facility's Volunteer Program Supervisor. The time sheet must include: (see Attachment B)

- Volunteer's name
- Volunteer's identification number
- Date and start & end times of service
- Description of service
- Daily total of hours served
- Monthly grand total of hours served

## TIMEKEEPING (cont.)

Facility Volunteer Program Supervisors are responsible for submitting Timekeeping Reports to the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator on a monthly basis. These reports are due by the 12<sup>th</sup> of every month.

The Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator shall be responsible for completing and submitting monthly reports to the office of the Director, quarterly hour reports to the office of the County Chief Executive Officer and maintaining cumulative hour logs.

## RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

Every year each facility will be asked to nominate a Teen and an Adult Volunteer for consideration as the Volunteer of the Year for the Department. In addition, the Department will recognize Volunteers that have served 1000, 5000, 10,000, 15,000, and 20,000 hours of service to our Department.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors hosts a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon and Awards Ceremony each year. Members of the Board of Supervisors, department heads, volunteer coordinators, and special guests publicly acknowledge the outstanding contributions of County Volunteers.

## COUNTY INSURANCE AND INDEMNIFICATION PROGRAM

### A. Eligibility

To qualify for coverage, a Volunteer must be formally enrolled in a program or activity sponsored by the County and must adhere to established work assignment guidelines. The Department will advise the Volunteer of work duties and maintain an enrollment record to document participation. The Volunteer's hours must be reported to the CEO's office as part of the mandated quarterly report. This is reported by the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator.

### B. Volunteer Medical Expense Reimbursement Insurance Policy (Volunteer Insurance Policy)

The Volunteer Insurance Policy was designed to reimburse a Volunteer for medical expenses a Volunteer incurs due to an injury that he/she suffers while performing approved volunteer services, and which are not covered by the Volunteer's own medical insurance.

### **Volunteers are not eligible to receive County workers' compensation benefits.**

#### 1. Summary of Benefits:

Volunteers receive medical expense reimbursement and accidental death and dismemberment coverage through a commercial insurance policy purchased by the County. This policy, currently written by CIGNA, provides benefits of:

- a. up to \$10,000 for accidental medical expenses
- b. up to \$500 for accidental dental expenses, and
- c. Up to \$5,000 for accidental death and dismemberment.

#### 2. Where to Obtain Medical Treatment

A Volunteer may obtain medical treatment from the Volunteer's private physician, or other facility of the Volunteer's choice. The Volunteer is responsible for payment of all medical bills for service. The Volunteer must file a claim under the Volunteer Insurance Policy to receive reimbursement from the insurance company for any costs not paid under the Volunteer's own medical insurance.

### 3. How to Report an Injury, File a Claim and Obtain Reimbursement:

If a Volunteer is injured and the Volunteer is eligible for benefits as described, the Volunteer must notify his/her supervisor immediately. A Non-Employee Injury Report form must be completed. In addition, the Volunteer must assist with the completion of a claim form. Instructions for the completion of the claim form require that:

- a. The Volunteer's program supervisor, or the Department Volunteer Programs Coordinator, sign the claim form.
- b. The Volunteer provide certain information including complete name and address, SSN, and a description of the injury. The Volunteer is also responsible for ensuring that their treating physician, or the treating facility, completes the physician's or facility's section.
- c. The Volunteer must attach copies of medical bills to the claim form. If medical billings are not readily available, they should be sent as soon as possible to the insurance company.

The claim form and medical bills should be mailed without delay to CIGNA at the address indicated in the upper right hand corner of the form. Questions concerning the claim form may be directed to the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator.

### C. Third Party Liability – County Defense and Indemnification of Volunteers and Accident Reporting Procedures

#### 1. Indemnification:

A Volunteer is defended and indemnified by the County for professional, auto and general liability (also known as "third party" liability), which may arise from the Volunteer's activities within the course of his/her approved assignment, and/or duties, unless the Volunteer's actions are fraudulent, malicious or criminal. Volunteers are not indemnified for punitive damages. Therefore it is very important that a Volunteer have a clear understanding of his/her work assignment and authority.

2. Volunteer Who Drive in the Course of Their Assignment:

Volunteers who operate vehicles in the course and scope of their volunteer assignments are defended and indemnified by the County for bodily injury or property damage, suffered by other parties, caused by the volunteer. Volunteers, which fall into this classification, must possess a valid California driver's license and comply with all California State laws, including laws relating to financial responsibility (automobile liability insurance) and seat belt use. In addition, these Volunteers must comply with departmental regulations, relating to driving, as would any compensated employee. Copies of the Volunteer's valid California Driver's License and the Volunteer's automobile liability insurance must be kept in the Volunteer's Volunteer file.

A Volunteer must report any auto accident, without delay, to his/her Volunteer Program Supervisor, even if it did not result in any injury or damage to a Volunteer or to others. Fatalities or serious injuries must be reported immediately. If the accident caused injury or damage to others, the Volunteer will be required to assist his/her supervisor in completing the "County of Los Angeles Report of Vehicle Collision or Incident." The completed report will be forwarded by the Volunteer Program Supervisor to the Departmental Volunteer Programs Coordinator. Please note that damage to Volunteer-owned vehicles or loss of personal items is not covered by the County.

PLEASE NOTE: Should there be any conflict or inconsistency between the information provided in this section concerning County defense and indemnification of Volunteers and County Code provisions or applicable state law, the County Code and state law shall prevail.



Times Available: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you possess a current:  valid CA Driver's License  Standard First Aid card  CPR card

Do you speak and/or write any languages other than English?  Yes  No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about volunteering with the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact**

Please provide the name, contact information and relationship to you of at least one person which we may contact in case of an emergency.

Name	Phone	Email	Relationship to Volunteer
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A FELONY OR MISDEMEANOR OTHER THAN MINOR TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS? YES  NO**

**If yes, please provide details on a separate sheet of paper and submit with your application.**

NOTE: CONVICTIONS ARE EVALUATED FOR EACH POSITION AND ARE NOT NECESSARILY DISQUALIFYING. DRUNK, RECKLESS OR HIT-RUN DRIVING ARE NOT MINOR VIOLATIONS.

By submitting this application, I affirm that the facts set forth are true and complete. I understand that if I am accepted as a volunteer, any false statements, omissions, or other misrepresentations made by me on this application may result in either the denial of my application or my immediate dismissal. **I further agree to participate in a comprehensive background check (at the Department's expense)\*.**

Volunteer Applicant Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(if volunteer is under 18 years of age)

Parent/Guardian's Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

It is the intent of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation to provide equal opportunity to all volunteers in all terms, privileges and conditions without regard to sex, race, religion, national origin, disability or any other factor.

The Live-Scan process is done in accordance with the laws and procedures set forth by the California Department of Justice. All Live-Scanning must be done at a Department of Parks and Recreation Facility or a location designated by the Department. Some applicants may have recently gone through the Live-Scan process for another reason at another location. Unfortunately, according to the Department of Justice, these procedures completed outside of the Department of Parks and Recreation, are invalid for our purposes and must be submitted through the Department of Parks and Recreation System. For further information, or questions, on the Live-scan process, you may contact the Volunteer Programs Coordinator at 213-738-2987.

*All volunteers must comply with "employment" procedures of both the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Parks & Recreation. A criminal record does not automatically disqualify a volunteer from a work assignment. The nature of the offense and type of work in which the volunteer will be engaged will be taken into consideration before a decision is made. The Human Resources section of the Department of Parks & Recreation and the Volunteer Programs Coordinator will confer in making the decision. However, AB 1663 prohibits the hiring of a volunteer in a position having supervisory or disciplinary authority over a minor if he/she is convicted of specified crimes.*

**Questions about our volunteer program?**

Contact your local County of Los Angeles Department of Parks & Recreation facility, or call 213-738-2987 or email the Volunteer Programs Coordinator at [volunteers@parks.lacounty.gov](mailto:volunteers@parks.lacounty.gov)



## Notes

# Equality Training

# Countywide policies cover



**Equal  
Employment  
Opportunity**

**Sexual  
Harassment  
Prevention**



**Diversity**

# A workplace free of discrimination and harassment

The County is a great place to  
work for all of our personnel

- The County promotes a  
workplace that is free from  
discrimination and harassment



# Office of Affirmative Action Compliance Goals

- To enhance service to all stakeholders in equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, contracting, Americans with Disabilities Act, and managing and valuing diversity.



# Sexual Harassment

## Definition

- Sexual harassment is UNWELCOME conduct of a SEXUAL NATURE that is directed toward a person because of their gender. It is either linked to the person's employment or substantially interferes with work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.



# Board of Supervisors' Sexual Harassment Policy

- The Board of Supervisors has ZERO tolerance for anyone who engages in acts of sexual harassment
- Anyone found to have sexually harassed a co-worker or a customer is subject to disciplinary action
- Review the sexual harassment policy booklet for detailed instructions or
- Contact your

# Board of Supervisors' Sexual Harassment Policy

- The Board of Supervisors has ZERO tolerance for anyone who engages in acts of sexual harassment
- Anyone found to have sexually harassed a co-worker or a customer is subject to disciplinary action
- Review the sexual harassment policy booklet for detailed instructions, or
- Contact your Supervisor or departmental Affirmative Action Coordinator

# Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- No discrimination on the basis of disability in employment or in the access to its services, programs or activities
- County Departments have designated an ADA Coordinator to carry out compliance

# Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the County - Employment Requirements

- Reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities
- Medical confidentiality is maintained
- No discrimination based on association with a disabled individual.
- Persons with disabilities must perform essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation

# Questions?

- REQUESTS OR QUESTIONS
  - Immediate supervisor
  - Departmental Personnel Officer/ADA Coordinator
  - Department Volunteer Programs Coordinator



# Diversity Defined

- Diversity is all the ways in which we are different and similar along an infinite number of lines. No itemized listing of differences or similarities can be complete.

# Four Layers of Diversity

- Personality
- Internal Dimensions
- External Dimensions
- Organizational Dimensions



# Board of Supervisors Policy on Diversity

- Create an inclusive workplace promoting Innovation, which comes from diverse work groups
- People are valued as individuals not stereotypes
- Differences of culture and heritage of all groups are appreciated
- As a team and as individuals, we learn to work effectively with people different from ourselves



ON VALUING HUMAN DIVERSITY:

**The Board's policy on diversity has a synergistic effect on L.A. County's workforce, making the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Our County is able to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in a positive and prepared manner.**



# Your Responsibilities

- Be sensitive to others
  - Treat everyone with respect; avoid offensive language and humor. Be professional
- Know the County policy and procedures on harassment and discrimination
  - Report any incidents of harassment
  - Never retaliate against those who've filed complaints
  - Remember that those who commit these actions could be disciplined
  - If told you're not following the policy, be understanding and change your behavior immediately

## Notes

# Youth Protection Training



# Definition of Child Abuse

- The idea of what child abuse is has expanded greatly in the last 25 years.
- We first thought of parents who battered their children, but now it is much broader.
- Parenting actions that cause harm or violates social norms are forms of abuse.
- It just simply is not the way children should be treated.

# Characteristics of Child Abuse

- Child abuse is a cause of stress like other events in life such as a divorce, loss of a loved one, or family disruption or problems in school and can cause the same symptoms.
- Reactions to child abuse can be excessive crying, clinging, aggressive behavior, withdrawal, or depression.
- If any of these symptoms appear over a period of time, they must be looked into.

# Four Kinds of Abuse

- Physical Abuse: Non- accidental bodily injury by a parent or other adult.
- Neglect: Withholding life's necessities from a child that is vital to the child's safety, health, or well-being.
- Sexual Abuse: Sexual activity where there is unusual power used such as age or size, or misuse of trust.
- Emotional Abuse: Denigrating name calling that harms a child's self image.

# Child Abuse

- The thought of child abusers as dirty old men or guys in raincoats are not true.
- Ordinary, well-respected people in positions of authority have been found to be child abusers.
- Relatives, public officials, clergy, and teachers— both male and female—are examples of child abusers.
- A child is more likely to be abused by somebody he or she knows or by someone in the family than by a stranger.

# Child Abusers

- Child abusers tend to be individuals with low self-esteem. Their own needs are so overwhelming that they are poorly equipped to meet the needs of children.
- Often abusive parents also abuse alcohol and drugs.
- Abusive parents sometimes have unreal expectations for their children and malign them when they fail to meet expectations.

# Date Rape

- Date or acquaintance rape is a real concern for high school youth programs.
- More than 50 percent of rape victims are adolescent females.
- Their greatest risk is from social relationships with a boyfriend or date.
- Date rape is a crime and must be dealt with just like other forms of abuse.

# Fraternization Policy

- Because high school programs are designed for young adults, there are often little differences in the ages of the adult leaders and the participants.
- It has been found that maintaining a close social relationship, such as dating, between adult leaders and youth participants is disruptive and, therefore, is not permitted.

# Disclosure

What if someone told you they were molested?

- Don't panic or overreact to the information just shared with you.
- Don't criticize the youth for telling of the abuse.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret; **you are required to inform your park program supervisor**, who will advise you on what to do.
- Do respect the youth's privacy discussing the abuse.
- Do encourage the youth to tell the authorities; let him or her know he or she is not to blame.
- Do keep abuse confidential; don't discuss with other post/group participants.

# Reporting Requirements

- No state requires the person making the report to have proof, but that it be in good faith.
- All states provide immunity from liability for those who report suspected child abuse.
- As a volunteer, you are cautioned to refrain from investigating the abuse but leaving it to the professionals and authorities.

Youth serving agencies will not tolerate any form of child abuse in its program and will take all necessary steps to remove offenders from participation.

